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## WORLD-POLITICS.

LONDON : PARIS : WASHINGTON.

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LONDON, *February, 1909.*

By the time this letter appears in print Parliament will have assembled once more. The session is bound to prove a momentous one. There is a very general feeling that the Government has reached the turning-point in its career and that on the policies and tactics it now adopts will depend very largely its future fate. The situation is not one that lends itself to an easy summary. The cross-currents are many and confusing and the most astute prophets confess themselves unable to see far ahead. Some things, however, seem definite and assured; and one of them is that the Government is losing ground. It has passed many admirable measures during the three years of its existence and its handling of foreign and Imperial affairs has been uniformly successful. But it is now undeniably face to face with the tokens of incipient reaction. Part of the reaction is due to the natural swing of the pendulum and to the lassitude that invariably follows a great burst of reforming energy; part, also, to a suspicion that property is being jeopardized by the radical measures of the Government and by its supposed subservience to the Labor group; part, again, to the unpleasant but unavoidable necessity of finding the money for the free and daring policies of social betterment on which the Ministry has embarked; and part, finally, to the hitherto ineffectual and slightly ridiculous campaign which Mr. Asquith has initiated against the House of Lords.

This last, from the purely Parliamentary standpoint, is the governing factor. The House of Lords has blocked the Government in four different directions. It has rejected its scheme for abolishing plural voting, its Education Bill, its Scottish Land Bill and its Licensing Bill—four open rebuffs that no sophistry can possi-

bly minimize. The Liberals, to do them justice, have made no attempt to minimize them. They have, if anything, rather tended to magnify both their seriousness and their effects. Mr. Asquith two months ago invited his followers to treat the House of Lords question as "the dominant issue." His followers have joyously responded to the appeal. Every Liberal meeting during the past few weeks has re-echoed with denunciations of the Upper Chamber and with dark threats that "a time will come" when its power of veto must be and will be stringently abridged. But the effect of these fulminations is considerably discounted, first, by the momentary popularity of the House of Lords, secondly, by the unpopularity in certain circles of some of the Bills which it threw out, and, thirdly, by the ample record of legislative successes which stands to the Government's credit and for which every Liberal orator is careful to claim on behalf of his party the full measure of popular gratitude and applause. Nine out of ten of the Government's Bills become law with the assent of the House of Lords; and it is extremely difficult for a Liberal who has been "pointing with pride" to the nine successes and assuring his audience that they represent a legislative output of unsurpassed beneficence and practicality, to build up a convincing case against the Lords as an arbitrary, irresponsible and obstructive Chamber on the strength of the single failure. Everything that the Liberals say in their own praise is a left-handed endorsement of the wisdom with which the House of Lords uses its powers. Every measure that they have passed has received the sanction, if not always the approval, of the Upper Chamber which they are now denouncing as an intolerable obstacle to the fruition of the Liberal programme. What, therefore, it amounts to is that the Liberals while claiming, and with absolute justice, that they have done magnificently and that no Government has ever done as well, complain that, but for the Lords, they might have done still better. The country, in my judgment, does not accept a complaint of this nature as sufficient excuse for remodelling the entire Constitution. It is not, however, on that account to be taken as satisfied either with the composition of the Upper Chamber or with its Constitutional prerogatives. It recognizes many anomalies in the first and much unfairness to the Liberals in the second. It does not, however, regard the unfairness as sufficient to justify what would in effect be Single Chamber government.

The more ardent Radicals, however, by no means subscribe to this view of the drift of popular opinion and believe they have everything to gain by forcing the fight against the House of Lords. When the Licensing Bill was rejected they urged the Prime Minister to dissolve at once. They assured him that the Government must either stand up to the Lords or abdicate. They threw at him his own declaration that the Government meant to "stand or fall" by its Licensing Bill. Mr. Asquith, however, was not to be hurried. While not abandoning the campaign against the Lords, while, on the contrary, putting it in the forefront as "the dominant issue," the Government clearly intends to stay in office as long as possible and to dissolve at a moment and on a ground of its own choosing. I am far from saying that this decision is a bad one. But it is clear that it carries with it certain important implications. It practically debars them from introducing measures that every one knows beforehand will be thrown out by the Upper Chamber. Among the latter class of measures is the Bill for disestablishing the Church in Wales. Welshmen, who are overwhelmingly Nonconformist, have long desired this Bill. They have been among the most steadfast supporters of the Liberals because Welsh disestablishment has been a prominent item on the Liberal programme for the last twenty years. The present Government is pledged to it. But what is the use of bringing it forward in a Bill which, after occupying nearly the whole of a session in the House of Commons, is destined to rejection in the House of Lords? To do so would be simply to invite another rebuff from the Upper Chamber—a rebuff that the Government would resent in words but not in deeds, that it would denounce on every platform, but that it would take care not to meet by the counterstroke of a dissolution. On the other hand, not to do so is to put a severe strain on the allegiance of the group, a very important group, of Welsh Liberals. It is to ask them to subordinate the one measure which they particularly care about to the general necessities of the Government's position. And what holds good for the Welshmen holds equally good for the measures of other groups. All of them must be invited to postpone the special reforms in which they are interested in order to avoid a conflict with the Lords. The Government meanwhile is to introduce such measures of social reform as it thinks likely to meet with Lord Lansdowne's

approval, is to devise and carry through two "democratic" Budgets, and then at the end of a couple of years is to take the sense of the electorate on what it has done and on what it has been prevented from doing.

Such seems to be the general intention of the Ministry. It has many obvious disadvantages. It asks an enormous amount of patience and restraint and self-sacrifice on the part of the various sections that compose the Liberal party. It is not a heroic policy; it is scarcely even a fighting policy. It is a confession that the Government is not yet prepared to join decisive issue with the Upper Chamber. It is therefore an encouragement to the Lords to prune, alter and mutilate the Ministerial proposals as they please. Every government, as time goes on, becomes weaker and less energetic. The moral authority of this Government is already on the wane and its tactics seem to imply that the moral authority of its principal opponent shall increase at its expense. These are serious objections; so serious, indeed, that the alternative of a brisk, forcing session with a dissolution immediately after the Budget, and an appeal to the country on the current issues of the Government's record, Free Trade and the House of Lords, is naturally favored in many quarters. The one thing that would be absolutely fatal would be to try to combine both schemes of strategy—that is to say, to put forward highly contentious measures, to see them rejected or emasculated by the House of Lords, and then to go on as though nothing had happened. If that course is adopted, if the country becomes convinced that the Government is afraid to risk a dissolution in order to assert itself against the Upper Chamber, then the next general election may see the disappearance of even this mighty Liberal majority. Personally, I believe that such a catastrophe may be avoided if the Government concentrates on the work of social and financial reform and avoids prematurely challenging the House of Lords. There are three first-class measures to which it stands committed. One of them, the Irish Land Bill, has already been introduced and its provisions lend themselves to compromise. The other two are a Bill remodelling the Poor Law and one reforming the electoral system. Of these the measure dealing with the Poor Law is by far the more important. It is indeed the most important task of social reorganization to which any British Government has

addressed itself in the past thirty years; and if accompanied, as it should be, and I believe will be, by schemes for dealing with the cognate problems of unemployment, housing, town-planning and labor bureaus, will be sufficient in itself to engross the energies of Parliament for another three or four sessions. The Electoral Reform Bill is naturally the last work to which the Government will set its hand, as its passage, by the custom of the Constitution, is followed at once by a dissolution.

Next to the House of Lords the governing consideration is finance. The coming session, indeed, will be mainly occupied with the Budget and everybody is already speculating on the scope and nature of Mr. Lloyd George's proposals. His task is not an enviable one. The Liberals hitherto have not failed to show a surplus and their financial policy has, indeed, been one of their most satisfactory achievements. In the first three years of their administration they have paid off debt to the extent of \$230,000,000. At the same time they have halved the sugar tax, repealed the coal duty, halved the increase of the tea duty, reduced the income tax on the smaller earned incomes by three-pence on the pound, and lightened the annual burden of taxation by some \$37,000,000. This year, however, they have a different and less pleasing tale to tell. Instead of a surplus there will be a realized deficit of some twenty-five or thirty million dollars. The Old Age Pensions scheme has cost already considerably more than the Government anticipated and the yield in all departments of revenue has fallen off. Moreover, it is common ground that the Navy estimates for the coming year must be substantially increased and that various projects of social reform will also necessitate new expenditure. No one can yet say definitely how much the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be obliged to raise by fresh taxation if he means to pay his way; but \$75,000,000 does not appear to be an extravagant estimate. The Tariff Reformers view the situation without any very great solicitude. The greater the deficit, they calculate, and the heavier the burden of direct taxation, the more inclined will England be to resort to their panacea of Protection. Mr. Lloyd George, however, is confident that he will be able to frame a Budget that will bring him in all the money he needs without departing from Free-Trade principles.

But difficult as is the position of the Government, that of

the Opposition is more difficult still. It is weak in numbers, weaker in ability, weakest of all in unity. A semi-secret, extremely theatrical body of Tariff Reform stalwarts, calling themselves the Confederates, have during the past few weeks pointed an ultimatum at the heads of the Free Traders who still remain in the Unionist camp, demanding their resignation or their conversion to Mr. Chamberlain's programme; and there is, I think, no doubt whatever that a vigorous effort will be made to drum out of the party all who fail to subscribe to the new gospel. But the resultant unity will be only superficial and will be purchased at the cost of losing some of the most brilliant members of the old Unionist organization. There are many signs that the country is turning against the Government; there are very few that it is turning towards Tariff Reform; and the idea that a fiscal revolution of such magnitude can be carried out by a small chance majority seems to me incredible.

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PARIS, *February, 1909.*

IF a man who had not heard anything about the foreign politics of France for two or three years were suddenly informed of their present state he would be pleasantly surprised. First, the Moroccan difficulty is over; and, in spite of what the Opposition papers may say to the contrary, the two years' campaign has yielded material results. It is true that France has no more footing in Morocco than she had when the broil began, and that the Sultan whom she was supposed to defend was ousted by the Sultan whom she nominally opposed. But it is also certain that her moral influence in the Mogreb is measurably superior to what it was three years ago; that such a thing as the Casablanca affair would now be an impossibility; that Moulay Hafid is more reliable than his brother; and that, in the event of another Algeciras conference, the French delegate would be, quite naturally, looked upon as the party chiefly concerned. In the second place, and in consequence of General d'Amade's successful operations, the French Government has been, for the first time since the establishment of the Republic, in a position to say a decided nay to Germany, as it did in the affair of the deserters from the Foreign Legion, and Chancellor von Bülow alluded to that occurrence in his next address to the Reichstag without any of his former sourness. Lastly, the confused, knotty, fearfully dangerous questions raised

by Austria during the last five months may be regarded as settled without any detriment to the relations of France with England, Italy, Turkey or even Germany, and the flagging Franco-Russian alliance has regained in combined action strength which it sadly needed.

On the other hand, many a foreign traveller visiting this country, with his own national difficulties uppermost in his mind, would envy it its apparent tranquillity. There is no racial or language question, as in Austria and Germany; no deep anti-constitutional feeling, as in Russia and even in Germany; no dangerous religious agitation, in spite of the soreness left by the Combes policy; no immediate danger from threatening unemployed, as in England; in short, there is no visibly disturbing element. Business is not flat; the Senatorial elections of January returned an overwhelming majority in favor of the Government; everything seems to be as it should be. It is true that the Royalist leaders of the *Action Française* gain ground every day and make more noise than ever; but it is no less certain that a Monarchist Restoration has not the slightest chance, apart from some catastrophe,—a revolution or a war,—and that M. Maurras's riotous outcry is hardly heard outside the precincts of the Sorbonne.

So would the present conditions of France appear to the native Rip Van Winkle and to the intelligent foreign observer. Yet it would not be long before both noticed, under the superficial tranquillity, a deep and universal disquiet. The atmosphere in this apparently orderly country is charged with anxiety. One feels it the more readily by contrasting it with the buoyancy and optimism of America, or with the self-possessed hopefulness of those wise little communities, Belgium and Switzerland. Between the ebullient, successful France of 1860 or of the early years of the Republic, when the memories of the war began to give way to more cheering reflections, and the France of to-day there is as much difference as between thoughtless youth and brooding old age.

Excepting the Royalists—whose chief hope lies in the childish idea that their nostrum is the only one likely to please a weary nation—nobody looks forward to the future, and most Frenchmen dread it. The expression of this uncomfortable feeling may vary with the social strata where it is found, but everywhere it is the same feeling, and its causes are identical.



In spite of Germany's restraint in the Moroccan affair and of her official good-will in the arrangement of the difficulties in the Near East, the shadowy spectre of war cannot be conjured away. Some refuse to see it, while others will see it close at hand, but everybody speaks of it under his breath.

But the prospect of war would not be such a bugbear in a country which never used to fear war, if other causes did not magnify the danger to be apprehended from it. The fact is that France lacks self-confidence, because she feels herself a prey to influences which individuals cannot counteract, and which the leaders of the country seem more inclined to put up with, or even favor, than to fight. The sore feeling between class and class, the levelling spirit which degraded the noblest French Revolutions into mere riots, is still rife. You see it rampant in the Socialist press and the powerful Socialist organization, and it constantly finds its way into legislation. During the last two months it has been prominent in the debate on the proposed abolition of capital punishment, and in such measures as those passed by Parliament *against* capital generally (in the last articles of the Income Tax Bill), *against* employers (who are deprived of the right of fining their men), and *against* parents (who run the risk of imprisonment if they blame the teaching of a schoolmaster who, in three cases out of five, is a Socialist).

For the prevalence of this spirit the Chamber is more answerable than the Government. No Prime Minister ever stood up against the arrogance and recklessness of the Socialists like M. Clemenceau. I do not think that any of those who charge him with complaisance toward Socialists will do half as much against M. Jaurès and his noisy friends as he has done, to say nothing of his efforts to heal the wounds left behind them by MM. Combes, Pelletan and André. Yet it is a fact that he would have more freedom of action if he had not been obliged to give office to rather shamefaced converts from Socialism, like M. Briand and M. Viviani. Were it not for them he might give decisive battle to the General Confederacy of Labor, and free the country from the most formidable association for evil that has threatened a nation since the Comité de Salut Publique. Meanwhile, he can only parry the blows daily aimed at him from those quarters.

If the presence of M. Clemenceau is not enough to secure

peace and order the existence of the Chamber is an active cause of mistrust and doubt, and the deputies are becoming objects of contempt and hatred.

I have often pointed out that the French Chamber is, thanks to the nonentity of the President and the Senate, the most absolute monarch in Europe. On the other hand, history shows that the French are wonderfully passive and patient, quite as much so as the Russians; and, if the Chamber chose to do its work honestly, the nation would gladly give it credit for its efforts and time for its experiments. Everybody sees that legislating has long ceased to be the easy task it used to be, when it only meant fighting for the Republican constitution (as from 1875 to 1885) or against clericalism (1880-1902). There is hardly a single question at present submitted to Parliament but involves economic consequences and an exceedingly nice discrimination of mutual rights which can, in most cases, be expressed in figures. Whether the debate be about financial or industrial legislation, about military or educational expenditure, the final vote invariably concerns private interests, and sometimes is of such far-reaching consequence that experts themselves are perplexed to ascertain its effects. Every one of the measures forced upon the attention of the Chamber by the Socialists and placed by M. Clemenceau on the Parliamentary programme is of that intricate nature.

The nationalization of the Western Railway—which, according to M. Barthou, the Minister of Public Works, only meant a trifling change in the men's caps—appears to-day to be perfectly unworkable, unless an exchange of lines is made with the neighboring Companies. Meanwhile, the railway remains in its old shocking state, and the yearly revenue loses nineteen million francs. This is the only "reform" which has actually been passed. Those now under consideration are even more difficult. The Old-Age Pensions Bill, though less ambitious than that passed at Westminster, still entails a heavy burden of about three hundred and fifty million francs a year towards which the state, departments, parishes and employers show equal reluctance to contribute. The Income Tax Bill is at present generally called the "Tax Reform Bill," and the gradual substitution of one name for the other has coincided with a gradually increasing appreciation of the difficulty involved in carrying out the transformation

it denotes. To levy a percentage on a man's income is only to do during his lifetime what the collectors do easily enough after his death. But to fix upon the relative liabilities of individuals towards the sum total of the national Budget is a work in which only the test of many years' experience can help, and the beginnings of which are sure to provoke indignant protests. I shall say by and by how the Chamber has managed to get through this impossible business.

Besides these complicated problems there are others which are intelligible to the man in the street but the solution of which is not merely a matter of understanding. Admiral Germinet states—very foolishly, too—that the French arsenals contain available ammunition in such insufficient quantity that three hours' firing would exhaust it. The Admiral is punished; but, his statement proving true and another demonstration of M. Pelletan's incompetency thus coming to light, it becomes urgent to do something for the Navy. M. Picard, the able and conscientious new Minister of Marine, makes calculations, the upshot of which is that two hundred and twenty million francs are necessary, and the Minister of Finance, who wants every penny in the Budget for his experiments in tax-reforming, threatens to resign. Again, specialists say that it has been conclusively proved by the Russo-Japanese war that the four-gun is superior to the six-gun battery, and a modification is inevitable. But, to the amazement of the layman, the four-gun battery is much more expensive than the other, and another item has to be added to the Budget. So, were it not for the occasional relaxation of a debate on capital punishment, the Chamber would constantly find itself confronted with questions involving financial consequences.

How do they approach these questions? The answer to this question will be the explanation of the uncomfortable feeling which I have been describing. Strong adjectives and adverbs are not in good taste, but if I say that the Deputies take their work lightly, it will mean a great deal more than is usually implied in the term, for levity in persons holding responsible positions is tantamount to deception and often to hypocrisy. Now the Deputies take their work exceedingly lightly. One ought not to attach serious weight to certain practical jokes in which they periodically indulge—for instance, the suppression of the *sous-préfets*; but they often dispose of most momentous questions in

exactly the same spirit. They passed the nationalization of the Western Railway with scandalous carelessness and without waiting for documents of paramount importance which the Senate took almost a year to extract from the *bureaux*. The Old-Age Pensions Bill which they have sent up to the Upper House might be the outcome of a debate in a Parliament of boys, so purely academic is it. They have spent more time on the Income Tax Bill in hand than on any of its seven predecessors, but it will take the Senate years to lick it into shape. The tactics employed were, as is usual with this ultra-Conservative Chamber, to give itself democratic airs, admitting of numberless relaxations in favor of the masses and throwing nearly the whole burden on the small fraction of persons possessing large fortunes. Special difficulties—for example, the taxing of professional profits—have been avoided by just “reserving” them, and the danger of frightening capital away is supposed to be met by threats which look very terrible on paper. The reasoning has run in the usual groove: the thing is to frame a bill anyhow, as the Senate will either throw it out or improve it, or the Cabinet will change in the interval and another Bill is sure to come up.

It is by such pretences that the Chamber has generally become objectionable to the country, and is every day losing what little influence it may have possessed as the sole active organism in the Republic. Popular discontent was crystallized by the Deputies raising their own salary to 15,000 francs, and the dullest elector enjoys a song against the “Quinze-Mille” who is supposed to represent him. I have not space enough to explain how an electoral reform which has long been advocated by a few very intelligent men, seldom in agreement about anything else, is likely to be passed, as the Deputy will be less afraid of an enlarged electoral college than of the angry local committee in his constituency. But, reform or no reform, the present Chamber will not succeed in changing a state of opinion which in other times would positively have invited a *coup d'état*.

Of the purely political situation there is little to say. Clemenceau is a martinet, and the Chamber have been twice on the point of overthrowing him. But the reaction, on both occasions, was almost comical. Who, better than Clemenceau, can fight the Socialists or possibly take the responsibility of a decision in international complications?

WASHINGTON, *February, 1909.*

THE second evacuation of Cuba by the United States, carried out in fulfilment of the self-denying ordinance passed by Congress in April, 1898, duly took place on the appointed day, and the island resumed the status of an independent republic. Undoubtedly, from a moral point of view, it was a memorable spectacle, which is destined to live in history. From the view-point of experience and common sense, however, the end of the American occupation was regarded with regret by almost every resident in Cuba who had any property to lose. It is probably a safe calculation that of one hundred thoroughly informed sojourners in the island there are not five who believe that the second experiment in independent government will be long-lived. Scarcely twenty-four hours had elapsed after the departure of the United States troops before a pessimistic forecast seemed to be justified, for a scandalously bad appointment to an important post was made by the new President, General Gomez, an appointment which presently he felt constrained to retract. It is taken for granted that the combination between the followers of Gomez and the followers of Zayas, which was formed at the recent election for the purpose of beating the Conservatives, will not long survive a distribution of the spoils of victory. Soon or late the Zayas faction, strengthened by disappointed members of the Gomez party, is expected to resort to insurrection, in which event may recur the necessity for a new American intervention. The question will then arise, How many times must we interfere for the restoration of order in Cuba, and for the protection of the islanders from the consequences of their own unfitness for self-government in order to make good a promise which, as events have shown, was a piece of sentimental folly? We say folly because few, if any, property-owners in Cuba will now deny that the island would be incomparably better off as a State or Territory in the American Union than it would be if permitted to continue its fitful and abortive essays in political independence.

The omens of fierce political warfare, the tumultuous massing of captains and their shouting which but a short time ago threatened President Roosevelt with quick and dire humiliation have subsided with surprising, not to say laughable, suddenness. Somehow the country has shown itself strangely indifferent to the awful usurpations of authority with which the Chief Magistrate

was charged. Even the accusation of attacks upon the freedom of the press failed to provoke the usual wide-spread outburst of indignation. Senator Tillman, rising to explain some Executive strictures on his conduct, must have recognized, when he took his seat, that President Roosevelt had got rather the best of the encounter. Nobody seems inclined to press the resolutions to investigate the right of the Chief Magistrate to withhold papers demanded by either House of Congress, though the resolutions were introduced with a loud flourish of trumpets. On the whole, though it is probable that Mr. Roosevelt has fewer friends in either chamber than has been possessed by any of his predecessors, with the possible exceptions of John Tyler and Andrew Johnson, he seems justified in the defiant consciousness that he has the people behind him, and that he will leave office with his aureole substantially untarnished.

At the hour when we write the campaign deliberately organized on the Pacific slope for the deliberate purpose of provoking the Japanese to reprisals which might lead to war seems happily to have been checked. In the States of California and Washington the proposed irritating legislation has at least been postponed. The people of that section appear to have been afflicted with megalomania since the visit of our sixteen battleships to the Pacific. They seem serenely oblivious of the fact that Japan could virtually blot their sea-coast cities out of existence before our ironclads could again round Cape Horn and come to their assistance. Truly phenomenal is the cool assurance with which the denizens of San Francisco assume that all our naval resources are to be at the beck and call of a section which in population and wealth represents only an insignificant fraction of the Republic. When one reflects that the Californians would really be at the mercy of the Japanese if a quick movement were undertaken by the latter, one cannot but marvel at the recklessness with which the former proclaim an intention of discriminating against the latter in a most invidious way—a discrimination to which no high-spirited people could be expected to submit. Happily, the inhabitants of California and Washington have at last been induced to listen to reason, and for a while, at all events, the baiting of Japanese is to cease.

Senator Knox of Pennsylvania presumably is a good Constitutional lawyer; at all events, he has been appealed to repeatedly

as such. Had he not been credited with special accomplishments in that direction he would scarcely have been appointed by President McKinley Attorney-General. Then, again, the President-elect has discharged judicial functions, and in the capacity of Judge must be supposed familiar with the provisions of the Constitution. Neither of them, however, seems to have recognized that the appointment of Mr. Knox to be Secretary of State in the Taft Administration would be a violation of the Constitution, which they will both take oaths to subserve. There is no doubt that the Federal Constitution (Article 1, Section 6, Clause 2) declares that "No Senator or Representative shall during the time *for which he was elected* be appointed to any civil office under the authority of the United States which shall have been created, or the emoluments whereof shall have been increased, during such time." Now the term for which Mr. Knox was elected Senator does not expire until March 4th, 1911, and during that term he voted to increase the salary of the Secretary of State, yet Judge Taft has designated him for the office of Secretary of State, and Mr. Knox has signified his willingness to accept the post and discharge its duties from March 4th, 1909. In view of this exhibition of oblivious disregard of a plain provision of the Constitution by a President-elect and a designated Secretary of State, some forgetfulness touching the dictates of the Federal organic law should be excusable in ordinary persons.

What can be done about the matter? A movement is on foot in Congress to repeal that part of the law increasing salaries which applies to the Secretary of State, and to maintain the salary of that post at its previous figure until after March 4th, 1911. Would not such a proceeding, while an evasion of the letter, be a violation of the spirit of the Federal organic law? Suppose Mr. Knox, instead of being a Senator, should be a Representative whose term of office would expire with that of the present Congress. Then the passage of the repealing statute proposed would simply deprive him of the increased salary for a very short time, and assure to him during by far the greater part of his term the increase for which he had voted. Would not the passage of a repealing statute for the benefit of Mr. Knox establish a dangerous precedent? Does Judge Taft wish to begin his administration with an attempt to evade the Constitution? Would it not be better to defer Senator Knox's accession to the

office of Secretary of State until after March 4th, 1911, though even for the two ensuing years it might be charged that he was profiting by an increase of pay for which he had voted? Whether Mr. Knox is or is not a rich man is patently beside the question. A course pronounced legitimate in the case of Mr. Knox would be legitimate also in respect of a man notoriously dependent on his salary for a livelihood.

The President-elect and the civil engineers whom he requested to accompany him to Panama have returned to the United States, and it is agreed upon, apparently, that the plan of a lock canal shall be carried out. It is now admitted that, if even at this time the plan were changed, a sea-level waterway could be constructed for less money than a canal with locks would cost. The die seems to be cast, however, without regard to the possible expenditure, or to the dangers which are alleged to attach to a lock system. All that onlookers, therefore, can do is to remain spectators of a venturesome experiment and hope for the best. After all, if the lock system breaks down we can always revert to the sea-level plan. There would simply have been a good many millions of dollars wasted.